

FORUMFEE & CHRISTMAS GREETINGS!

Many agencies have returned subscriptions to the London Irish Youth Forum and to AGIY INFO.

HOWEVER, some subscriptions are outstanding!

If you wish to join the Forum and/or wish to continue receiving AGIY INFO please return the enclosed form with appropriate cheque payment as soon as possible. The subscription year runs from September to September so payments are overdue!

**THIS WILL BE THE LAST EDITION OF
AGIY INFO IN 1991 SO SEASON'S
GREETINGS TO ALL OUR READERS
"AGUS NOLLAIG SHONA DUIT!"**

GUIDE AVAILABLE

The new edition of AGIY's "Guide to London for Young Irish People" is now available following its presentation to President Mary Robinson in Dublin on 7th November 1991.

The Guide is packed with over 200 pages of practical information for intending emigrants and for young Irish people arriving in London.

The Guide includes comprehensive lists of advice centres as well as a directory of Irish contacts and community activities in London. In addition the Guide provides guidance for emigrants to consider before they decide to emigrate and urges young people to seek advice and help in Ireland before they decide to go to London.

The Guide includes for the first time new sections on **Training Schemes and Courses, Young Mothers, Employment Rights, Studying in Britain and Services for People with Disabilities.**

For more information and to receive your copy please complete the enclosed order form inside this edition of "AGIY-INFO".

Financial assistance for the production of the Guide was received from the Baring Foundation, The Lawlor Foundation, The Irish Youth Foundation, The Pilgrim Trust and the John Paul Getty Foundation.

LACK OF PROFESSIONAL ADVICE SERVICES FOR EMIGRANTS CRITICISED

Over 50 emigrant and youth groups from London and Ireland attended the joint seminar "The Information Needs of Emigrants" which was held in Dublin on 9th November.

Delegates were highly critical of the inadequate level of professional advice services in Ireland for intending emigrants and called for the establishment of an independent, well resourced body to work on developing and maintaining appropriate and accessible services for intending emigrants.

The Seminar was jointly organised by Emigrant Advice (Dublin), the Emigrant Advice Unit (Belfast), AGIY and the National Youth Council of Ireland, and also focussed on Migrant Rights and 1992, Discrimination against Irish people in Britain and the inclusion of Emigration in the School Curriculum.

A Seminar Report will be produced and published by the 4 organising groups and it will be launched early in the New Year.

The Seminar was successful in networking agencies and individuals working in the pre-emigration field in Ireland

Organisations from N. Ireland have already agreed to meet again to explore the establishment of a Forum which would meet regularly and help to support front-line pre-emigration advice services.

It is hoped to re-convene all groups who attended the Seminar plus other interested individuals and agencies at the launch of the Seminar Report in 1992. This would be a useful opportunity to formalise contact between groups and possibly establish a Steering Group to pursue the main recommendation of establishing an independent body to singularly focus on emigrant issues.

The Seminar was supported by FAS the Employment & Training Authority in the Republic of Ireland, the Training and Employment Authority/Belfast Action Team in N. Ireland, Combat Poverty, the Ireland Funds, Aer Lingus and RYANAIR.

NEW SERVICES FOR IRISH IN LONDON

4 new initiatives have just started which aim to improve and expand work with young Irish people in London.

IRISH GAY HELPLINE

For a variety of reasons lesbians and gay men are thought to leave Ireland in disproportionate numbers to their representation in the population.

Once in Britain, for a variety of reasons, they may not be able to readily access resources in the Irish community, either formal or informal, for fear or disclosure of their sexuality.

Thus many Irish lesbians and gay men then turn to the mainstream lesbian and gay community for support but here they may encounter anti-Irish prejudice.

Many feel pressurised to suppress their Irish identity in order to survive and be accepted. Many feel pressurised to choose between their identity as an Irish person or their identity as a lesbian or gay man.

For these and related reasons a number of Irish gay men have come together to establish an Irish Gay Helpline.

The Irish Gay Helpline opened on Monday 25th November and provides a telephone information, listening and counselling service for Irish gay men in Britain. The Helpline will be staffed by trained volunteers and operates each MONDAY from 7.30 p.m. - 10.00 p.m. All volunteers are Irish gay men and at any one time there will be 2 volunteers on the Helpline.

The Helpline can be contacted by phoning (081) 983 4111 or writing c/o BM IGH London WC1N 3XX

The Helpline can only take calls from Irish gay men.

Irish lesbians should contact CAIRDE Irish lesbian social and discussion group which meets on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of every month from 6.30 p.m. - 8.30 p.m. and can be contacted by Tel. (071) 837 2782 or writing c/o London Friend, 86 Caledonian Road, London N1

OUTREACH FOR IRISH WOMEN

The Irish Support and Advice Centre in Hammersmith are currently seeking to develop outreach work with Irish women in their area who are disadvantaged, isolated or discriminated against.

This initiative is in response to contact from Health and Social Services who have identified a need for a 'culturally sensitive' and 'gender specific' worker for Irish women.

The Centre is particularly keen to make contact with women living in B & B hotels and in the private-rented sector.

Currently 20% of families placed in temporary accommodation by Hammersmith Council are Irish and although there are proportionately more Irish-born women than men living in the borough, women are not as visible as men in terms of requests for advice or help.

By developing an outreach dimension, the Centre aims to bring the services to those who very often may need them most.

At present, the Centre is attempting to set up a support group to enable Irish women to build up networks of social contacts and also to provide a time and space where they can exchange common interests and experiences.

The Centre also hopes to create stronger ties with the Travelling Community by encouraging greater use of the Centre's services and by providing a monthly advice session.

The Centre would welcome referrals and contact names of women in the Hammersmith area who would benefit from a visit from the Outreach Worker or who may be interested in joining a support group.

For further information contact FIONA BLANEY by Tel. (081) 741 0466 or write c/o Irish Support & Advice Centre, 55 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 8AU

LIVING IN LONDON PROGRAMME

The Safe Start Foundation has been running a pilot series of Living in London Programmes over the past number of weeks which aim to develop effective jobsearch skills for new arrivals.

There is one remaining five-day course which runs from Dec. 9th - Dec. 13th and will be based at Friends' Meeting House, St. Martin's Lane, London W1.

Each course participant will have a CV produced professionally at the end of the course and each course covers topics including telephone technique, application forms completion, developing job leads, interview technique etc.

Participants receive travel expenses on a daily basis as well as maintaining their statutory benefits.

Participants should be registered for unemployment benefit for 4 weeks or less, be newly arrived in London and seeking long-term employment opportunities.

Referrals for this last course can be made through Safe Start or through a New Claims Adviser at local Jobcentres.

For further information on possible Living in London programmes in the New Year contact:

RUTH or JOHN at Safe Start by Tel. (081) 203 7788.

IRISH WORKING GROUP

Centrepont Soho has established an Irish Working Group which aims to improve Centrepont's service to young Irish people who are homeless and to increase awareness of Irish issues within the organisation.

Any groups or agencies interested in exchanging information on young Irish people and homelessness please contact:

MAEVE CORR,

Centrepont Soho,

72 Delancey St.,

London NW1 7SA.

Tel. (071) 482 0907

FORUM FILE

At the last London Irish Youth Forum Meeting, **Liam Greenslade** from the Institute of Irish Studies at the University of Liverpool examined the incidence of mental illness amongst Irish people and suggested why Irish people seem disproportionately likely to suffer psychological distress.

Rates per 100,000 for mental hospital admission in England and Wales in 1971 and repeated for England in 1981 showed that Irish people from both the Republic and N. Ireland had and continue to have the highest rates of admission to mental hospital of any immigrant or ethnic group (Source: Cochrane).

In particular, rates for Irish women were the highest of all groups, being more than double that for English born women in the same period.

Cochrane and Bal in 1989 also provide rates of principal diagnoses for all admissions for men and women in the same period. **Irish people whether born in the Republic of Ireland or N. Ireland were found to have the highest rates of admission for depression, neuroses, personality disorder, alcohol and drug abuse and other psychoses.** For schizophrenia diagnosis Irish people were only exceeded by people born in the Caribbean.

Another point to note in this study was the over representation of Irish people in the categories of depression and alcohol abuse; approximately **2.5 times** greater than the native born rate for men and women born in the Republic of Ireland and nearly twice the rate of people born in Northern Ireland for depression.

For alcohol abuse the rates were approximately **9 times** and **7 times** more for men and women respectively born in the Republic of Ireland with **7** and **5 times** the native born rate for men and women from N. Ireland.

For depression the rate of admission for women born in N. Ireland and the Republic of Ireland is approximately twice that their male compatriots.

Two hypotheses are commonly advanced to account for high rates of mental hospitalisation amongst migrant

groups; the social selection hypothesis and the social causation hypothesis.

The former suggests that high rates are the result of the over representation of psychologically unstable individuals amongst migrants, the latter that mental illness is the result of the stress of migration and post migration adjustment.

The health experience of of Irish people in Ireland and in England however suggests that the Irish population in England corresponds with neither hypothesis.

Liam Greenslade argues therefore that only by examining the psychological manifestations traceable to the sustained economic cultural and social effects of colonisation upon Irish people at home and abroad can we understand the incidence and characteristics of mental illness amongst our community.

The Psychiatrist *Frantz Fanon* argued that we must not simply understand colonialism as an economic or political process, it is also a psychological and ideological one.

Liam Greenslade concluded that the solution to the problem of mental ill-health amongst Irish migrants lies in the hands of Irish people who are the only ones who can do anything about mental illness that appears to be endemic in our culture.

"To do this the Irish community must respond by developing strategies that reflect the conditions and circumstances in the present" he said.

For more information about **Liam Greenslade's** work and other research that has been carried out into the incidence of mental ill-health within the Irish community by the Institute of Irish Studies contact:

The Director,

The Institute of Irish Studies,

University of Liverpool,

PO Box 147,

Liverpool. L69 3BX.

Tel. 051 794 3831

London Irish Youth Forum (LIYF)

The date of the next LIYF meeting is

Thursday 5th December 1991

at 2.30 p.m. in

**The Irish Centre,
50 Camden Square,
London NW1.**

The Main Agenda Item will be :

*Young Irish People's Experience of The Criminal
Justice System and the Role of The Probation Service.*

Speaker:

**Brendan O'Keeffe, Inner London
Probation Service.**

AGIY-INFO is produced by the Action Group for Irish Youth, 5-15 Cromer Street, London. WC1H 8LS.

Should your group wish to publicise any events, notices etc. please contact Dave or Joan at AGIY Tel. 071 278 1665.

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